(b) what is the limit of subsidy on farm products in developing countries and what is the limit on such products in developed countries; and

(c) the reasons for this discrimination and whether this question would be taken up with the WTO ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH) : (a) to (c) WTO Agreement provides a non discriminatory, rule based, predictable multilateral framework for trade among member countries. Under the Agreement on Agriculture, the permissible level (de-minimis) of domestic support expressed in terms of Aggregate Measure of Support (Amber Box) is 10% and 5% of the total value of the agricultural produce respectively for developing countries and developed countries. The domestic support given to low income or resource poor farmers in developing countries is also excluded from the Aggregate Measure of Support.

During the on-going agricultural negotiations under Article 20 of the Agreement on Agriculture, India has demanded additional flexibility for developing countries in providing subsidies or domestic support to take care of their food security, poverty alleviation and rural employment concerns.

Policy for Empowerment of Women

*569. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have finalised the National Policy for Empowerment of Women; and

(b) if so, what are the definite goals, targets and policy prescriptions for raising the status of women ?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The goal of the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women. Specifically, the objectives of this Policy include :

(i) Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential;

(ii) The *de-jure* and *de-facto* enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres—political, economic, social, cultural and civil;

(iii) Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation;

(iv) Equal access to women to health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office etc.;

(v) Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination agains women;

(vi) Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women;

(vii) Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process;

(viii) Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child; and

(ix) Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organizations.

The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women has been widely disseminated to Central Ministries/Departments, State Governments, Non-Governmental Organisations and Universities. The Policy requires Central and State Ministries to draw up time bound Action Plans for translating the Policy into a set of concrete actions with measureable goals to be achieved by the year 2010.

The Policy document also contains policy prescriptions for raising the status of women in the areas of Judicial Legal System, Women in Decision Making, Mainstreaming Gender Prespective in Development Process, Economic Empowerment of Women, Social Empowerment of Women, Violence Against Women, Rights of the Girl Child and Mass Media.